Listing of the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated polypeptide ~~comprising an amino acid sequence~~ selected from the group consisting of:

[[an]] a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:1[[-4]],

b) a polypeptide comprising a naturally occurring amino acid sequence having at least 90% sequence identity to the [[an]] amino acid sequence ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:1[[-4]],

c) a biologically active fragment of a polypeptide comprising the [[an]] amino acid sequence ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:1[[-4]], and

d) an immunogenic fragment of the [[an]] amino acid sequence ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:1[[-4]].

2. (Currently Amended) An isolated polypeptide of claim 1 comprising the amino acid sequence ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:1[[-4]].

3. (Original) An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 1.

4. (Original) An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 2.

5. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide of claim 4 comprising the polynucleotide sequence ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:[[5-8]]5.

6. (Original) A recombinant polynucleotide comprising a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide of claim 3.

7. (Original) A cell transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 6.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Original) A method for producing a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

a) culturing a cell under conditions suitable for expression of the polypeptide, wherein said cell is transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide, and said recombinant polynucleotide comprises a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide of claim 1, and

b) recovering the polypeptide so expressed.

10. (Original) An isolated antibody which specifically binds to a polypeptide of claim 1.

11. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide ~~comprising a polynucleotide sequence~~ selected from the group consisting of:

a) a polynucleotide comprising the [[a]] polynucleotide sequence ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:[[5-8]]5,

b) a polynucleotide comprising the [[a]] naturally occurring polynucleotide sequence having at least 70% sequence identity to [[a]] the polynucleotide sequence ~~sequence selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:[[5-8]]5,

c) a polynucleotide ~~sequence~~ complementary to a),

d) a polynucleotide ~~sequence~~ complementary to b), and

e) an RNA equivalent of a)-d).

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Original) A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 11, the method comprising:

a) hybridizing the sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to said target polynucleotide in the sample, and which probe specifically hybridizes to said target polynucleotide, under conditions whereby a

hybridization complex is formed between said probe and said target polynucleotide or fragments thereof, and

b) detecting the presence or absence of said hybridization complex, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Original) A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 11, the method comprising:

a) amplifying said target polynucleotide or fragment thereof using polymerase chain reaction amplification, and

b) detecting the presence or absence of said amplified target polynucleotide or fragment thereof, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

16. (Currently Amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising ~~an effective amount of~~ a polypeptide of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

17. (Currently Amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition of claim 16, wherein the polypeptide comprises the [[an]] amino acid sequence ~~selected from the group consisting~~ of SEQ ID NO:1[[-4]].

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an agonist of a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 to a compound, and

b) detecting agonist activity in the sample.

20-21. (Cancelled)

22. (Original) A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an antagonist of a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 to a compound, and

b) detecting antagonist activity in the sample.

23-24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Original) A method of screening for a compound that modulates the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1, said method comprising:

a) combining the polypeptide of claim 1 with at least one test compound under conditions permissive for the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1,

b) assessing the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the presence of the test compound, and

c) comparing the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the presence of the test compound with the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the absence of the test compound, wherein a change in the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1 in the presence of the test compound is indicative of a compound that modulates the activity of the polypeptide of claim 1.

27-66 (Canceled)

67. (New) An isolated polynucleotide comprising at least 60 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 11.

66. (New) A method of claim 13, wherein the probe comprises at least 60 contiguous nucleotides.

68. (New) A method of screening for a compound that specifically binds to the polypeptide of claim 1, said method comprising the steps of:

a) combining the polypeptide of claim 1 with at least one test compound under suitable conditions, and

b) detecting binding of the polypeptide of claim 1 to the test compound, thereby identifying a compound that specifically binds to the polypeptide of claim 1.